

participation. Senator BOXER has introduced similar legislation, S. 229, in the Senate.

Although women are guaranteed equal rights in the Afghan constitution, they continue to face challenges including intimidation, discrimination, targeted violence, and efforts to restrict their legal rights. In March the parliament of Afghanistan approved the Shi'ite Personal Status Law which was signed by President Karzai. According to the United Nations, one provision of the law would have the effect of legalizing marital rape by mandating that a wife cannot refuse sex to her husband unless she is ill. In addition, the law would forbid women from working or receiving education without their husbands' permission; restrict their ability to leave the house without a male relative; and aims to strip women of their rights as mothers by granting child custody only to men. President Karzai has ordered that the law be reviewed, and has said that changes will be made to any articles which contradict Afghanistan's Constitution and Islamic Sharia. I believe that the United States has an obligation to ensure that women and girls have the opportunities that they were denied under the Taliban. It is imperative that we provide the support needed to ensure that the rights of women are protected in the new Afghanistan.

PUGET SOUND ENERGY

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the wonderful work being done by Puget Sound Energy. Located in Bellevue, Washington, they continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote energy efficiency through investment and smart ideas. I'm proud to represent this company in Congress.

In late March, the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, named Puget Sound Energy one of 89 "Energy Star" organizations across the country. Through its Residential New Construction "Energy Star" Lighting Program, Puget Sound Energy is working to increase demand for qualified lighting products in new, single-family homes. Beginning in 2008, they doubled investment in partner outreach as part of an ongoing regional fixture program. Serving as the facilitator, 16,000 Energy Star fixtures and 39,000 Energy Star CFLs were installed in new homes, representing a 100 percent increase in energy savings from 2007.

The work Puget Sound Energy is doing in Washington State is not only beneficial to our environment; it is also beneficial to the economy. Customers can take advantage of energy rebates for improving efficiency in their homes through the installation of new windows, doors and improved insulation, among other many other things. In 2008 alone, Puget Sound Energy customers collectively saved \$30 million on energy bills and helped support more than 450 new "green" jobs.

Utilizing green technology and improvements positively impacts our environment, our communities and—especially important during these tough days—our economy. The work Puget Sound Energy is doing in Washington is exactly the type of forward-thinking, reason-

able work that businesses and individual Americans should strive for, and I congratulate them on their new classification as a leader in energy-efficient technologies.

HONORING AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MICHAEL H. DORAN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding citizen of Buffalo and Western New York and a dear friend who will be deeply missed, Michael H. Doran. Mike Doran, a well-known attorney in Buffalo and the devoted father of two children, was tragically killed in a plane accident on Tuesday, April 30, 2009. This is a devastating loss to his family and friends, and to our community.

A Buffalo native and alum of the University at Buffalo and the University of Buffalo School of Law, Mike would have celebrated his fifteen year anniversary with his law practice, Doran & Murphy, with his law partner, Christopher Murphy, this Saturday. Mike was on his way home from working on a case in Cleveland to attend his daughter's school function when his single-engine plane crashed. Those who witnessed the crash say Mike steered the failing plane away from a nearby neighborhood and are calling him a hero.

For over 25 years, Mike has represented those afflicted with serious injury and occupational disease, as well as wrongful death cases. He was most recently working with Roswell Park Cancer Institute in promoting a program designed to help detect lung cancer in high risk patients. The early detection program was proven effective in prolonging life and curing lung cancers.

Mike was deeply loved by his family, friends and the community. He was very involved in numerous organizations including the board of directors of the Western New York Leukemia Society, the University of Buffalo Center for Children and Families, and was an active volunteer with the University of Buffalo Law School Alumni Association. Michael was an FAA certified pilot, an avid extreme skier, and was the 2008 champion of the Buffalo Croquet and Debating Club.

Madam Speaker, I offer my deepest condolences to Mike's family. My thoughts are with them, and I share their grief of this wonderful man I am honored to have called a dear friend. His loss is felt by the many lives he touched in this community.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SAIGON

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in remembrance and recognition of the 34th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. This historical date commemorates the end of the Vietnam War, and represents the beginning of a new life for tens of thousands of Vietnamese

people, as they began their hopeful journey to America. Thirty-four years later, I rise to honor the memory and the sacrifice of the hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese soldiers, American soldiers and civilians who lost their lives during this time.

After the fall of Saigon, thousands of Vietnamese began a treacherous exodus out of Vietnam, determined to rebuild their lives. Their daring escape was by boat and on foot, through thick jungles, over jagged mountains, through snake-infested rivers and across turbulent seas. They became refugees in many nations, including America, with nothing more than the clothes on their backs and the hope for freedom in their hearts.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who struggled for peace and freedom. I also rise in honor of local agencies and churches such as The Vietnamese Community of Greater Cleveland and the St. Helena Catholic Church, which offer havens of support, services and hope to immigrants from all over the world. The Vietnamese culture, through the care and commitment of its people, has flourished in Cleveland and across America, while remaining connected to its ancient cultural and historical traditions.

JACKSON CAMERON OTTO MAKES HIS MARK ON THE WORLD

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my daughter Catherine and her husband Tim Otto on the birth of their third child and my sixth grandchild, Jackson Cameron Otto. Jackson was born on Sunday, April 26, 2009, at 2:42 a.m. and weighed 7 pounds and 14 ounces, and was 21.25 inches long. My wife Faye and I are delighted to welcome Jackson as he joins our five other grandchildren, William, Virginia, Cameron, Walker, and Andrew. Faye and I wish Catherine and Tim and big brothers William and Andrew great happiness upon this new addition to our family.

Faye and I are truly blessed by the arrival of little Jackson Cameron Otto. The birth of a new child is a joyous occasion that reminds us of the promise of a new life. Children remind us of the incredible miracle of life, and they keep us young-at-heart. Every day they show us a new way to view the world.

My family and I are looking forward to spending a lot of time with our new bundle of joy and introducing him to all of our friends and neighbors in North Carolina's Second Congressional District.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to declare my strong support for H.R. 1913, the

Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and to urge its swift passage in the House of Representatives.

This important legislation would expand the federal definition of hate-motivated crimes to include gender, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity. Violence provoked by prejudice has no place in our society. It jeopardizes not only the safety of the victims but also their friends and neighbors, and upsets public order by making people feel threatened in their communities.

For example, persons with disabilities are often vulnerable to criminal hateful acts because they may seem different or use unfamiliar assistive technologies. Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia, including my home state of Rhode Island, already recognize and prosecute these cases as hate crimes. However, there is still no uniform recognition on the national level that a disability could make a person uniquely susceptible to prejudice. Equally troubling is that Rhode Island law enforcement officials reported that nearly 50 percent of hate crime victims were targeted because of their sexual orientation. Yet even as so many Americans joined together to mourn the loss of Matthew Shepard last October, on the tenth anniversary of his brutal murder, hate-motivated crimes still go unrecognized under federal statute.

H.R. 1913 has the practical purpose of authorizing training and grants for local law enforcement officials to facilitate prevention, investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. However, the passing of this bill today is equally as important as the civil rights legislation that was enacted several decades ago, which enforced the principle that our country does not accept targeting any American for violence or discrimination based on hatred. I urge my colleagues to join me in fighting bigotry that threatens our communities by voting for the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 627) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish fair and transparent practices relating to the extension of credit under an open end consumer credit plan, and for other purposes:

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chair, for too long now, credit card companies have toyed with the lives and financial health of the American people. For far too long, credit card companies have seemed to offer hard-working Americans a lifeline, but that lifeline is really an endless web of debt.

Cardholders are surprised by huge hidden fees that are buried in the fine print.

Credit card companies aggressively prey on our young college students who are not yet working. These companies rove college campuses and entice students with gifts, with the intent of collecting interest payments as the student ravel herself in debt.

We are in the midst of a horrible recession. Millions of Americans are without work, trying to keep their homes, feed their families, and stay healthy, because a trip to the doctor could be the straw that breaks the camel's back. But credit card companies remain cold, chasing the almighty dollar.

Many people have a hard enough time just paying monthly interest charges, yet these companies add on additional fees and increase interest rates by 10 and 20 percent—all without notice.

The truth is they do not want consumers to pay off their balances. It is much more profitable to feast on the interest.

We must put an end to this. We can no longer allow these unjust practices to continue. We cannot allow this industry to continue to profit on the hardship of Americans who use their services.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE "WAYSIDE SHRINE AND CROSS CRAFTING IN LITHUANIA" EXHIBIT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Folk Art exhibit of "Wayside shrine and cross crafting in Lithuania" on the occasion of Lithuania's Millennium being celebrated this year.

Cross crafting in Lithuania has a rich 400 year old history and was inscribed into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage List of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2001. The exhibit "Wayside shrine and cross crafting in Lithuania," displayed at the Embassy of Lithuania in Washington, DC features beautifully crafted crosses and shrines which are traditionally built to recognize special occasions and significant events for individuals, families or communities. These crosses can be found throughout Lithuania in churchyards, roadsides, villages and even government buildings, and typically feature the Virgin Mary and various saints. The craft of cross making is one that has been passed down through generations since the 16th century and serves as a symbol of Lithuania's rich cultural and historical history.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Lithuania's rich history and the cultural significance of cross crafting as featured in the "Wayside shrine and cross crafting in Lithuania" exhibit.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, on March 23, 2009, March 24, 2009, March 30, 2009, March 31, 2009, and April 21, 2009, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 145–149, 157–168 and 193–195 due to flooding in my State of North Dakota. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No.

145, "aye"; rollcall No. 146, "aye"; rollcall No. 147, "aye"; rollcall No. 148, "aye"; rollcall No. 149, "aye"; rollcall No. 157, "aye"; rollcall No. 158, "aye"; rollcall No. 159, "aye"; rollcall No. 160, "aye"; rollcall No. 161, "nay"; rollcall No. 162, "aye"; rollcall No. 163, "aye"; rollcall No. 164, "aye"; rollcall No. 165, "aye"; rollcall No. 166, "aye"; rollcall No. 167, "aye"; rollcall No. 193, "aye"; rollcall No. 194, "aye"; and rollcall No. 195, "aye."

INTRODUCTION ON IRAN REFINED PETROLEUM SANCTIONS ACT

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, our nation has a vital national security interest in ensuring that Iran does not possess nuclear arms or achieve the means to produce them on short notice. My bill, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions Act (IRPSA), is designed to help prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapons capability.

This legislation requires that any foreign entity that sells refined petroleum to Iran—or otherwise enhances Iran's ability to import refined petroleum through, for example, financing, brokering, underwriting, or providing ships for such activity—will be effectively barred from doing business in the United States. The same would be true for any entity that provides goods or services that enhance Iran's ability to maintain or expand its domestic production of refined petroleum.

Because of its limited refining capacity, Iran is forced to import roughly one-quarter of the gasoline and other refined petroleum products it consumes from other countries. Without this outside help, much of the Iranian economy would grind to a halt. It seems hard to believe that one of the world's leading oil exporters could find itself in this position, but it is reality—one that can only be attributed to shockingly poor planning and administration by the Iranian regime.

I and the other co-sponsors of this bill therefore believe that this measure could have a powerfully negative impact on the Iranian economy, rendering it more difficult for the Iranian government to continue to fund a nuclear program that the international community has repeatedly called upon it to suspend. Our goal, of course, is not to punish the Iranian people, but to maximize the chances that we can persuade the Iranian government to accede to the will of the international community.

Let me be clear: I fully support the Administration's strategy of direct diplomatic engagement with Iran, and I have no intention of moving this bill though the legislative process in the near future. In fact, I hope that Congress will never need to take any action on this legislation, for that would mean that Iran at last has complied with the repeatedly-expressed demand of the international community, as embodied in five separate U.N. Security Council resolutions, to verifiably suspend its uranium enrichment program and to end its pursuit of nuclear weapons once and for all.

The larger purpose of my bill is to demonstrate to one and all—but particularly to the Iranian regime—the importance that the U.S. Congress places on the Iranian nuclear issue.